



Caring About Hawai'i's Future

Social work helps society to embrace change. Becoming a Social Worker/Human Services Professional makes good change.

Inside Your Social Worker/ Human Services Profes- sional Information Kit

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This publication was produced by the staff of the Department of Human Resources Development. It contains brief or highlighted information on the Social Worker/Human Services Professional series and is intended for general information purposes. For detailed information always contact your Departmental Personnel Office.

Welcoming the State's New Social Worker/Human Services Professionals

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A Special Message From the Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Aloha Kakou,

While you may know of me as the Director of HRD, I came to “HR” by way of being an attorney practicing in labor and employment law. I also had the rare privilege of serving as a Per Diem Judge in Family Court, making decisions on a myriad of social problems. However, the basis for my affinity with each of you is in the roots of my first career – working as a social worker on Kauai.



As you all know, being a social worker is more than a profession, it's a calling. You deal with helping others see and adapt to change in positive ways. Change comes in many forms and affects your clients, and you, in varied degrees. We recognize that you experience it on the “front lines” everyday.

But as society changes, we must also professionally adapt in order to succeed at new challenges. We all know that for decades, personnel systems across the country have tried coping with the changes affecting social workers by applying band-aid fixes upon ever-widening fissures. These take an obvious toll on you, your family and loved ones.

After much input and thought, your State Department of Human Resources Development is “thinking outside the box.” I'd like to take this opportunity to present highlights of our efforts to start anew. The **Social Worker/Human Services Professional Series**, the State's new classification for social workers, is our bold step forward to acknowledge systemic changes occurring in the world around us. We need to be progressive. I want you to be on the upward swing in the continuum of change and adaptation.

The journey we are embarking on is almost unprecedented in Hawaii's social work history. We ask each of you to become pioneers and join us, to become proactive and collaborative partners for a great future.


Kathleen N. A. Watanabe
Director

Social Worker/Human Services Professional...

Why This Change?



Over the years, there has been significant concern expressed regarding the State executive branch's inability to provide adequate social services to the public, in part due to difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified people to do the work.

The Social Worker classification study was conducted to address the following issues and concerns which have been expressed by various stakeholders, including managers responsible for the provision of human services:

- * To address the serious problem of filling vacant positions that provide professional social/human services
- * Increasing demand for human services in existing and new areas, coupled with a short supply of academically-trained social workers, locally as well as nationwide
- * A need to increase the number of qualified applicants and compensate employees properly

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Supporting the Continuum of Social Work and Human Services

WHO ARE THE STATE'S SOCIAL WORKERS?

In the State Executive Branch, persons currently classified as Social Workers are located in the departments of Human Services, Health, Public Safety, and Education, in a variety of programs (e.g., family services, child welfare, foster care home licensing, mental health, developmental disabilities, corrections, parole, special education, etc.). They provide varied services, depending on the needs of their programs that may (but do not necessarily) include intake, provision of on-going services, counseling, home-finding, conduct and referral of treatment services and program evaluation and development.

Some of these positions are filled by employees who started work with the traditional Master's degree in Social Work. Many others came with degrees in fields other than social work and, through on-the-job training and experience, have learned to effectively provide needed services for their agencies.

As of December 31, 2003, there were 912 Social Worker positions in the State of Hawaii Executive Branch, of which 171.5 positions



were vacant, for an overall vacancy rate of 19%.

WHAT IS POSITION CLASSIFICATION?

Classification is the process which groups positions into classes based on the assigned work (duties and responsibilities) and the knowledge and abilities required to perform that work.

Classification is descriptive, rather than prescriptive; that is, classes of work describe the kind of work typically performed by groups of positions performing similar work. Classification does not dictate or prescribe to managers what duties are to be assigned. Classes of work are assigned to pay grades (e.g., SR-22) based on relationships with other classes in the State's civil service system.



HOW WAS THE STUDY CONDUCTED AND WHO WAS INVOLVED?

The study was conducted by the Employee Classification and Compensation Division (ECCD) of the Department of Human Resources Development (HRD) with the assistance of employees, managers and personnelists. Study activities included:

- * Convening a focus group of social work managers and departmental personnel staff
- * Brainstorming needs, wishes; identifying issues and seeking feedback

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- * Distributing a written survey to, and reviewing responses from, social work unit supervisors
- * Conducting field reviews, audits, and shadowing various social worker employees in their work settings
- * Researching different classification systems nationwide, including broadband systems
- * Drafting preliminary concepts for new classes and seeking feedback on options from managers
- * Briefing department heads, managers, personnel staff, professional and employee organizations, local schools of social work, legislators and the Governor's Office
- * Considering comments and concerns from affected departments and external agencies including the Hawaii Government Employees Association, University of Hawaii School of Social Work, Hawaii Pacific University, Chaminade University and the local chapter of the National Association of Social Workers regarding the proposed new classes and series.

The Human Services Professional series and the Parole Officer series were established effective May 1, 2004. Most of the vacant Social Worker positions were



An Encouraging Recruiting Response

Recruitment for the new classes Human Services Professional III and IV was recently conducted by the State Recruiting Office from May 16 to May 28, and yielded a significantly greater number of applicants and eligibles than previous recruitments for Social Workers. We are hopeful that programs will be able to fill more jobs to provide needed services which will eventually lead to reduced caseload problems for existing employees.

reclassified to the Human Services Professional series, and all of the Social Worker positions at the Hawaii Paroling Authority were reclassified to the Parole Officer series.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON S.C.R. 127

Senate Concurrent Resolution 127 H. D. 1, C. D. 1, which was adopted on May 3, 2004, requested the Department of Human Resources Development

to delay the elimination of the Social Worker series until DHRD "obtains the examination of, and consults and coordinates with, the Hawaii Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, University of Hawaii School of Social Work, Hawaii Pacific University School of Social Work, Brigham Young University School of Social Work, and the Hawaii Government Employees Association."

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Stakeholders Meet

To date, the parties have met on three occasions to share and discuss various concerns and problems, including short-term and long-range solutions. In researching the classification practices of all fifty states for social workers and other social service professionals, and conducting extensive literature review on issues pertaining to social workers and child welfare workers, DHRD did not find any evidence that persons without a master's degree in social work could not perform social work, nor could we find that they were not providing satisfactory services.

Stakeholders Agree

All parties have agreed that DHRD should proceed to implement the remainder of the study recommendations in order to resolve immediate staffing concerns. It was also agreed that the term "Social Worker" would be incorporated in the official class title and that the parties would continue to meet to pursue long-range plans to provide increased education and training to students and employees in social work.

WHAT DO THE NEW CLASSES LOOK LIKE?

- * **Social Worker/Human Services Professional I, II, III, IV, V, VI**



and VII (SR 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26 and 28, BU-13)

- * **Parole Officer I, II, III, IV, V and VI** (SR 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26, BU-13)
- * **Child/Adult Protective Services Specialist and Supervisor** (SR-23 and 25, BU-13)
- * **Clinical Social Worker and Supervisor** (SR-23 and 25, BU-13)

The Social Worker/Human Services Professional series and the Parole Officer series were established effective May 1, 2004. The official class specifications for the new series are available on HRD's web page at <http://www.state.hi.us/hrd>.

The **SOCIAL WORKER/HUMAN SERVICES**

PROFESSIONAL SERIES is a broadband occupational grouping which will include positions currently classified as social workers and new social/human service occupations as they emerge. In the future, we may consider folding other existing classes (e.g., Mental Health Care Coordinator, Self-Sufficiency Support Services Specialist, etc.) into the Social Worker/Human Services Professional Series. There is a national trend to use broadbanding like this for human service and other occupations.

The Series is broad-based and allows for both flexibility and customization.

- * Broad minimum qualification requirements permit a larger

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number of applicants, with different types of academic degrees, to qualify.

- * Customization to meet program needs allows programs to choose to interview/hire only those applicants who possess desirable job-related education and/or experience.
- * Selective Certification Requirements may be established for certain positions which have bona fide occupational qualification requirements (e.g., requires an MSW for hospital accreditation purposes).
- * The use of working titles such as 'Social Worker' is permissible.

The **PAROLE OFFICER SERIES** recognizes a work specialty which involves providing services to adult parolees. Because it is separate from the Social Worker/Human Services Professional series, applicants from more diverse education/experience backgrounds can qualify for this type of work.

The **CHILD/ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES SPECIALIST AND SUPERVISOR** classes recognize

WHAT'S NEXT?

As a result of discussion with the external agencies, The Human Services Professional Series has been retitled Social Worker/Human Services Professional I, II, III, IV, V, VI and VII.

All positions that have already been reclassified to the Human Services Professional series will bear the new title Social Worker/Human Services Professional.

The Employee Personnel Action Report (EPAR) for all employees who were hired as Social Workers prior to July 1, 2004, will contain the class code and class title Social Worker.

The remaining Social Worker positions will be reclassified to the new Social Worker/Human Services Professional series. All affected employees will receive an EPAR in early August, which will reflect the changes.

HRD is working to establish the new Child/Adult Protective Services Specialist and Supervisor (SR-23 and SR-25) and Clinical Social Worker and Supervisor (SR-23 and SR-25) classes. Positions affected will be reclassified, as appropriate. The effective date of the reclassification of those positions will be effective May 1, 2004.

a work specialty which involves the provision of certain protective services to child and dependent adult victims of abuse/neglect. It is limited to experienced professional practitioners in this work and provides a higher rate of compensation.

The **CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER AND SUPERVISOR**

classes recognize a social work specialty which involves the provision of psychodiagnostic and psychotherapy services using advanced techniques. It is limited to those who meet the national standards for education and experience within this work specialty and provides a higher rate of compensation.

Questions and Answers



1. I would have liked to take part in this study. How were participants selected?

We selected social workers from a variety of programs to get a good representation of the various services being provided and duties and responsibilities performed. We asked supervisors to identify workers who had been on the job long enough to be familiar with their work, and who would be comfortable talking to us. After that it was a matter of selecting workers who could squeeze us into their busy schedules.

2. Why can't we retain the current Social Worker classes, in addition to having the new Social Worker/Human Services Professional classes?

The current Social Worker series is old, outdated and is no longer useful in classifying positions today. In addition, it would be duplicative to have two series requiring similar duties and overlapping requirements for different job titles, and it would create significant recruitment and record keeping problems and could result in delays in filling positions.

3. Can I/my department choose not to participate in this reclassification and remain in the current Social Worker series?

No. HRD is responsible for developing and maintaining a position classification system(s) that provides for placing positions in their appropriate classes. Positions that perform work that involves the same nature and level of complexity of duties and responsibilities and require the same minimum qualification requirements to perform those duties must be allocated to the same class of work.

4. Will there be a difference in the work I did as a Social Worker and the work I will be doing as a Social Worker/Human Services Professional? Child/Adult Protective Services Specialist? Parole Officer? Clinical Social Worker?

No. The change in the classes and titles will not change your work assignments. However, regardless of the study, your supervisor may make changes in the work assigned to your position as program requirements dictate.

5. As Social Workers we could apply and meet the minimum qualification requirements for most Social Worker positions. As Parole Officers, Social Worker/Human Service Professionals, etc., will we be limited only to our own

series? As a Social Worker/Human Services Professional, would I qualify for a Parole Officer position?

When screening applications, recruitment and examination people look at the actual work you performed, not just your job title. Within the new classes there is generally a commonality of job requirements up to the III level, so as a Social Worker/Human Services Professional I, II, or III, you would probably qualify for a Parole Officer I, II or III and vice versa. At the IV level, however, specialized experience requirements may be required.

6. Can I continue to call myself "Social Worker" even though that's not my official title?

The use of working titles is allowable and may be used at the discretion of operating programs/departments. Working titles may be used in working with clients

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and others, and on business cards, correspondence, etc.

7. I worked hard to get my MSW, and feel I should be given recognition as a social worker.

As mentioned above, the use of working titles is allowable. In addition, the Employment Personnel Action Report (EPAR) of employees who occupy Social Worker/Human Services Professional or Child/Adult Protective Services Specialist positions and were hired as a Social Worker prior to 7/1/04 will contain the class code and Social Worker class title the employee was classified in prior to being reclassified to Social Worker/Human Services Professional. The former Social Worker class code and title will appear in the 'Business Title' field of the EPAR.

8. You are weakening the social work profession by allowing people without a master's degree in social work to perform work that has been performed by social workers.

Actually, the minimum qualification requirements for entry into the new Social Worker/Human Services Professional series are quite

similar to the minimum qualification requirements for Social Workers. Presently, there are a number of employees in the Social Worker series who do not have a master's degree in social work but who have been successfully performing the work of positions currently titled Social Worker.



9. The Department of Public Safety (PSD) Social Workers will now be either Social Worker/Human Services Professionals or Parole Officers. Why don't all PSD social work positions share one title?

Both groups work with persons convicted of a crime. However, positions are classified based on their assigned duties and responsibilities, not just their clientele. Positions that perform parole work as their primary

assignment will be classified Parole Officers. Positions that provide social services, although in a correctional facility, will be classified Social Worker/Human Services Professionals.

10. What factors did you look at in deciding to give a higher salary range for Child/Adult Protective Services Specialist work? I think my work is just as difficult.

We are aware of the difficulties encountered in all human services work; however, certain aspects of Child/Adult Protective Services functions stood out; i.e., critical direct services provided to children/dependent adults who may be in danger of imminent harm, where workers must make immediate decisions affecting the fate of alleged victims of abuse/neglect, including removing them from the home, against the wishes of parents/caretakers.

11. What factors did you look at in deciding to give a higher salary range for Clinical Social Work? I think my work is just as difficult.

Although we are aware of the difficulties encountered in all human services work, the work of the Clinical Social Worker stood out because of the advanced

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techniques used in the work and the advanced education and experience required to learn and perfect those techniques.

12. I currently receive shortage pay. Will my shortage pay continue? If so, for how long?

Current employees who are receiving a shortage differential as Social Workers will continue to receive their current differentials when their jobs are moved into the new classes. Their total compensation (base pay plus shortage differential) will not be reduced.

13. Will new people hired as Social Worker/Human Services Professionals also have shortage pay?

We will continue to provide raised hiring rates (through the use of a shortage differential) until we are able to assess whether the shortage still exists. If not, the hiring rate may be reduced, but only for new hires. If there is continued difficulty in recruiting qualified persons for certain positions, a shortage differential may continue to be warranted for those positions.

*“We ask each of you
to become pioneers and join us,
to become proactive and collaborative
partners for a great future.”*

Kathleen Watanabe
Director of HRD

14. I don't like these changes. Can I file a grievance? Can I file an appeal?

Classification is a non-negotiable subject and classification actions are thus not grievable. However, there are other avenues you can use to have your concerns heard.

If you believe the class your position was reallocated to does not reflect the duties and responsibilities assigned to your position, you may file an internal complaint on the classification action taken on your position. The internal complaint must be received by your departmental personnel office within 20 working days from the date of notice of action.

If you do not agree with the salary range assigned to the new class of work your position was reclassified to (in relation to other classes of work within the same bargaining unit), you may file an internal complaint on the initial pricing of the new class.

The internal complaint must be received by the Department of Human Resources Development within 20 working days from the date of notification of action.

Please contact your departmental personnel office for more information regarding internal complaint filing requirements.